THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI HANS RAJ BHARDWAJ): (a) There were 8 vacancies in the sanctioned strength of 25 Judges in the Madras High Court as on 26.7.1988.

(b) Some proposals for making appointments in the Madras High Court have been received. The Government is making all efforts to fill the vacancies at the earliest with a view to expediting disposal of pending cases.

Rehabilitation of Afghan Refugees

270. SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India propose to take any steps to support UN efforts to help rehabilitation of Afghan refugees after Soviet pull out from that country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR SINGH): (a) and (b) Government is closely monitoring progress in the UN efforts to help in the rehabilitation of Afghan refugees. No final decision has so far been taken regarding the quantum and mode of Indian assistance to be provided in this regard.

I.P.K.F., Tamil Militant Casualties in Sri Lanka

271. SHRI M. VINCENT: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total number of casualties incurred in Sri Lanka on both Tamil Militants and I.P.K.F. after the Indo-Sri Lanka accord; and

(b) how much is the total expenditure incurred till date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE PRODUCTION AND SUPPLIES IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI): (a) Upto 17.7.1988, 511 IPKF personnel were killed and 1526 injured. In an operation of this kind, it is not possible to determine the exact number of militants killed.

(b) According to the figures compiled so far upto 31.5.1988, a sum of approximately Rs. 97.80 crores has been spent on IPKF operations.

Modernisation of Indian Rare Earths

272. SHRI M. VINCENT: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any scheme for the modernisation and expansion of Indian Rare Earths at Manvalakurichy in Tamil Nadu;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and the estimated expenditure to be incurred thereon; and

(c) by when it is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) Yes, Sir. A Scheme for modernisation of Minerals Separation Plant of IRE at Manavalakurichy is under implementation.

(b) The Scheme consists of setting up a Concentrate Upgrading plant and the modernisation of existing plant by additions to and replacement of certain plant and machinery. The capital expenditure is estimated at Rs. 812 lakhs. The Scheme is intended to increase the concentrate feed to the plant and augment recoveries of high value minerals. The Scheme